**Parent Involvement Requirements**

Federal guidelines mandate that each Title I school will develop a written parent involvement policy that includes these aspects:

1. Convene and annual meeting to explain the Title I program to parents and inform them of their right to be involved in the program;
2. Offer a flexible number of meetings (the school may use Title I funds to pay related expenses, such as child care, transportation, or home visits);
3. Involve parents, “in an organized, ongoing and timely way,” in planning review and improvement of Title I programs;
4. Provide timely information about its Title I programs to parents, describe the curricula, the student assessments and proficiency levels students are expected to meet, respond promptly to parent suggestions and (if requested) provide opportunities for regular meetings where parents can provide input; and
5. Provide parents with an opportunity to submit dissenting views to the LEA if a school’s school-wide program plan is not acceptable to them.

Cowan and Edwards (2009) note that “violations of parental involvement…consistently constitutes the single biggest category of findings in ED’s annual monitoring reviews” (p. 269). In other words, district and school-level violation of the parental involvement requirement is a big problem. Providing “equitable services to parents participating in the Title I program” (p. 270) is a requirement of federal law and the parental involvement set-side must be used for these activities. Those funds cannot be transferred to another line item in your budget to use for a different purpose.

Cowan, K. and Edwards, C. (2007). *The new Title I: The changing landscape of accountability*. (6th ed.). Tampa, FL: Thompson Publishing.

**Excerpts from Cowan and Edwards (2007):**

**Each LEA and School May Provide:**

1. *Input on Professional Development* – Each LEA and school *may* involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training.
2. *Literacy Training* – Each LEA and school *may* provide necessary literacy training for parents with Part A funds if the LEA has exhausted all other reasonable available sources of funding.
3. *Parents’ Expenses* – Each LEA and school, *may* pay reasonable and necessary expenses associates with parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school related meetings and training sessions.
4. *Parents Reaching out to Parents* – Each LEA and school *may* train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents.
5. *Convenient School Meetings* – Each LEA and school *may* arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct in-home conferences between parents who are unable to attend the school meetings and the teachers and other educators who work with their children.
6. *Model Approaches* – Each LEA and school *may* adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement.
7. *District-wide Parent Council* – Each LEA *may* establish a district-wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in funded programs.
8. *Community Involvement* – Each LEA and school *may* develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities.

**Each LEA and School Shall Provide:**

1. *Program Information for Parents* – Each LEA and school *shall* provide assistance to parents of participating Title I children in understanding such topics as the state’s academic content and achievement standards, the assessments being used, the requirements of Title I, Part A, and how to monitor their children’s progress and work with educators to improve their achievement.
2. *Materials and Training* – Each LEA and school *shall* provide materials and training, such as literacy training and training on how to use technology, to help parents work with their children to improve achievement.
3. *Educate Educators* – Each LEA and school *shall* educate teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value of utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent program and build ties between parents and the school.
4. *Preschool Coordination* – Each LEA and school *shall* “to the extent feasible and appropriate,” coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs with Head Start, Even Start and other preschool programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.
5. *Understandable Communication* – Each LEA and school *shall* ensure that information related to school and parents programs, meetings and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.
6. *Other Requested Activities* – Each LEA and school *shall* provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request.